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Scoping Future Nuclear Proliferation Risks: Emerging Trends in Sociocultural Modeling and Analysis

Center on Contemporary Conflict

Monterey, California: Naval Postgraduate School



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The Project on Advanced Systems and Concepts for Countering WMD (PASCC) is run at the Center on Contemporary Studies (CCC) and sponsored by the Defense Threat Reduction Agency (DTRA). PASCC awards and supports strategic studies and dialogues that anticipate and try to reduce the threat of WMD capabilities.



The CCC has a respected track record for providing research and timely analysis on a variety of topics to leading decision makers in the U.S. national security community. Located in the Naval Postgraduate School, the CCC is the research wing of the Department of National Security Affairs.

Research in Progress describes ongoing PASCC research. For more information, please contact pascc@nps.edu.

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Performer: Utah State University

Project Lead: Jeannie Johnson

Project Cost: \$83,000

FY15-16

Objective:

To anticipate the likelihood of successful nuclear acquisition, one must identify key constituencies within a polity of concern and assess the internal sociocultural drivers that shape thinking and decision-making on WMD/WME issues. This project seeks to strengthen and refine sociocultural analytic frameworks designed to anticipate WMD aspirants and isolate points of leverage within those national communities in order to disrupt or shift weapons aspirations.

Approach:

The principal investigator, in collaboration with the University of Maryland's Center for the Advanced Study of Language, will build upon the already-established Cultural Mapping Method and Cultural Analytic Framework. In Phase 1, the team will assess recent developments in sociocultural analysis and identify WMD aspirants to study. In Phase 2, the team will critique and refine analytic tools from Phase 1 and address findings when these tools are applied to case studies. In addition, two workshops will be held at the University of Maryland. The first will convene technical experts, case study authors, and other analysts to discuss recent developments in sociocultural analysis and potential WMD aspirants. The second workshop will critique the analytic tool and assess the findings of the case study. In Phase 3, the researchers will compile their findings into a comprehensive report.

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